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UNCLAS DUBLIN 001267

SIPDIS

USDA FOR FAS/DLP AND ITP DIVS; FAS/FAA/BLEGGI

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TAGS: [ETRD](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#)

SUBJECT: IRISH BEEF EXPORTS TO EGYPT RESUME

1. Irish beef exports to Egypt are set to resume, albeit slowly, with the completion of the production of 700 metric tons this week. Egyptian authorities imposed restrictions on Irish beef in late 2000 following worries over the incidence of BSE in the EU. Irish exports to Egypt peaked at 154,000 tons in 1999 (150,000 tons in 2000), and the lack of access to this market, since 2000, was heavily felt throughout the sector in Ireland. Ongoing veterinary discussions since then resulted in partial agreements to the re-opening of the market but no trade had resulted. Further discussions during the past summer have resulted in this breakthrough. Post understands that one of the veterinary conditions imposed is for direct supervision of the slaughtering by Egyptian veterinarians.

2. With slaughtering of cattle entering its busiest period, Irish beef processors have welcomed the return of Egypt as a potential market. Irish beef exports to the UK face a possible turbulent future in the next few months with the ending of the Over Thirty Month scheme (where beef from animals aged over thirty months is excluded from the food chain). That event has the potential of displacing 70,000 tons of Irish exports to the UK and alternative markets must be found for this beef. A re-opening of a critical market may encourage other international markets to re-examine at Ireland as a source for beef.
Kenny